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FEARS OF ISRAEL-LEBANON WAR AS 12 KILLED IN ISRAEL-HELD GOLAN

Israel on Sunday vowed to 'hit the enemy hard' after rocket fire from Lebanon killed 12 youngsters in Israeli-annexed Golan Heights

'HEZBOLLAH HAS CROSSED ALL RED LINES'

A rocket strike Saturday at a football field killed at least 12 children and teens, Israeli authorities said. Israel blamed Hezbollah for the strike, but the Lebanese group said it has nothing to do with the attacks. "There is no doubt Hezbollah has crossed all the red lines here, and the response will reflect that," Israel Foreign Minister Israel Katz told Israeli media | P9

CALL FOR CALM AS ISRAEL STRIKES LEBANON

- Israel's military said on Sunday it had hit Hezbollah targets "both deep inside Lebanese territory and in southern Lebanon"
- Iran warned Israel of "unforeseen consequences" if it attacks Lebanon. Western powers including France and Britain have called for calm. Those dead in Golan were aged between 10 and 16

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ISRAELI SOLDIERS KILLED NEAR BORDER WITH LEBANON SINCE OCTOBER LAST

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TIRUCHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

ONE Manu Bhaker is India's first woman shooting medallist at the Games. It is also India's first medal in the 10m air pistol event

5 Overall, this is India's fifth medal in shooting in the history of the Games and first since Gagan Narang in 2012. Others to have won include Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore, Abhinav Bindra and Vijay Kumar

KARMA, BHAGAVAD GITA and the legend of Manu Bhaker

IT is perhaps more than just providence that Manu Bhaker won a medal in the town of Chateauroux, where a river named Indre flows. After all, religion, spirituality and philosophy were all vital ingredients in this story. It is difficult to not be a touch philosophical when talking about the 22-year-old's bronze in the women's 10m air pistol final. She had secured a quota in the 25m pistol event and qualified for the 10m event only through trials. On Sunday, she won India's first shooting Olympic medal since 2012 (London). Fittingly, Manu kept speaking about inspiration after her feat. Much of that inspiration came from that profound book of 700 verses – The Gita.

In the final, Manu was calm. There were also occasional glances at Jaspal Rana, her coach sitting among the audience. "One look at him and that gives me courage," she said.

Karma is what she believes in, more so after the Tokyo Games where public criticism caused her to hit the nadir. "I read a lot of Gita," she said. "One of the famous quotes is (Krishna's advice to Arjuna) *karma pe dhyan do, aur phal ke chinta mat karo* (focus on the work but don't worry about the reward). The same was running through my mind from last night (Saturday). I told myself 'whatever happens, I'll handle it'."

Manu and her coach spoke about several motivating parables, anecdotes and stories. He doesn't believe in getting an external psychologist. "My coach is my psychologist," she had said earlier. Just before the final, the duo were talking about Abhimanyu – Arjuna's son. How he knew how to enter the *chakravyuh* but did not know how to exit. "So we talked about how he knew how to get in but not about getting out. Use your information. Just do it. Win or you die. So she won," Rana said. The training rituals, according to Manu, was even more challenging than the actual Olympics. "Perhaps, that has made me stronger," she said.

One such ritual involves Manu meeting specific targets or paying a fine. "For example, he sometimes sets a target, and if you score that much, then fine. If not, for the deficit in points (for example, if the target is 582 and you score 478), you have to give 40 euros or 400 euros, depending on the situation." They donate the entire proceeds or buy gifts and distribute it.

One over, two to follow. She will pair with Sarabjot Singh in the mixed 10m air pistol event before the 25m event later on in the week. P13

Coaching centre owner held for student deaths, sent to judicial custody

UJWAL JALALI @New Delhi

A day after three young IAS aspirants were killed after they got trapped in a pool of water that entered the basement of a civil service coaching centre in central Delhi following heavy rains, the police on Sunday arrested the owner Abhishek Gupta and coordinator Deshpal Singh. The accused were produced before a local court, which sent them to 14 days of judicial custody.

The three IAS aspirants who lost their lives in the tragedy are Shreya Yadav of Ambedkar Nagar in Uttar Pradesh, Tanya Soni from Telangana, and Nevin Dalvin from Ernakulam in Kerala.

Initial police investigation revealed that the coaching institute was illegally operating a library in the basement area. A case has been registered under relevant provisions of the BNS, including culpable homicide. Police said the owner was at the spot at the time of the incident.

DCP (central) M Harsh Vardhan said they received information around 7 pm that the basement of a UPSC coaching institute in Rajender Nagar had been flooded with the possibility of some students trapped inside. "Immediately the local police reached the spot," the DCP said. The entire road outside the Rau Coaching Centre was submerged in at least 2 feet deep water. The Fire Brigade was also alerted, which rushed 7 rescue vehicles and began pumping out the water. But as the street was already waterlogged, the basement was getting flooded fast.

The NDRF was then intimated which dispatched its divers after which they retrieved the first body of a woman at 10.40 pm, the second at 11.10 pm, and the third around 1 am.

Locals said the torrential rains had waterlogged the entire area and gushing waters broke down the airtight gate of the basement after which the water entered the basement at a very high speed.

The tragedy left the student community in a state of shock. They staged protests against the Municipal Corporation of Delhi and the coaching institute's management for their alleged negligence. Minor scuffles also broke out between police and students. P5

Union minister H D Kumaraswamy uses a handkerchief to cover his nose, which began bleeding during a press meet in Bengaluru on Sunday

HDK rushed to hospital after nosebleed

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

UNION Minister and JDS state president HD Kumaraswamy was rushed to a private hospital in the city after his nose started bleeding during a press conference here on Sunday.

Even as he was talking to reporters after a BJP-JDS coordination committee meeting, blood started tickling down from Kumaraswamy's nose. He was rushed to Apollo Hospital in Jayanagar. Hospital sources said the bleeding was because of medications that Kumaraswamy is taking for his health conditions. He was stable, they added.

In March this year, Kumaraswamy, who is 64, underwent a Transcatheter Aortic Valve Implantation (TAVI), a non-surgical procedure, for the third time due to restenosis caused by tissue valve degeneration. He had previously suffered two strokes. In February 2024, he had developed severe breathlessness, fatigue and chest pain due to the tissue valve degeneration. He has undergone three heart surgeries till date.

Bangladesh braces for more youth protests

YESHI SELI @ New Delhi

MOBILE INTERNET RESTORED
The mobile internet connection was restored in Bangladesh on Sunday, 10 days after it was restricted by the authorities across the country to stop the spread of fake news. The mobile internet connectivity was restored at around 3.00 pm local time

EVEN as the authorities in Bangladesh maintain that the law and order is under control, the country remains tense with the student groups warning that they are preparing to resume protests over the arrests of their leaders who spearheaded the quota agitation.

Some analysts have gone as far as suggesting that what began as a student protest is turning into a revolution.

Students Against Discrimination, the student group that has led the protests, said on Sunday they would end their week-long protest moratorium. The group is demanding that the police free all student leaders arrested over protests.

However, sources say the police are pressing with covert action against protest leaders. Block raids are reportedly happening on a daily basis and youngsters are being rounded up and put in detention.

"The situation is tense even now as on the pretext of 'block raids' young people are being rounded up and put under detention in cells," Professor Nazmul Ahsan Kalimullah, a political commentator in Bangladesh, told this newspaper. Reports said fully armed police are knocking at the doors in random order to arrest those considered as troublemakers. "For the first time in the history of Bangladesh, there were helicopters used during the protests," Kalimullah said.

However, the protesters are staying firm with their demands, one of which is that "visible actions" be taken against government ministers and police officers responsible for the deaths of protesters.

"From being a mere student protest, this is soon turning into a revolution against the government," Pinaki Bhattacharya, exiled Bangladesh rights activist, told this newspaper. "Our statistics confirm 266 people have died. (The government) is maintaining power through brutal force," he added.

At least 9,000 people have been arrested nationwide since the unrest began, Bangaldesh daily *Prothom Alo* reported. Bangladesh home minister Asaduzzaman Kha on Sunday said 147 people had been killed in clashes. Bangladesh officials in Delhi did not immediately respond.

Students protesting over the deaths of three IAS aspirants, in Delhi | PARVEEN NEGI

INDIA BEAT SRI LANKA

India's Yashasvi Jaiswal drives during the T20-I cricket match between India and Sri Lanka, at the Pallekele International Cricket Stadium, on Sunday. India won the match by 7 wickets, and clinched the 3-match series | PTI | P12

India Cements acquisition okayed by UltraTech board

ARSHAD KHAN @ New Delhi

THE board of directors of India's largest cement maker UltraTech Cement on Sunday approved the purchase of 32.72% equity stake held by the promoters and their associates in Chennai-based India Cements Limited (ICL). UltraTech, an Aditya Birla group firm, will pay ₹3,954 crore at ₹390 a share to buy the entire 28.42% stake of ICL promoters — Srinivasan N, Chitra Srinivasan, Rupa Gurunath, and S K Asokh Baalaje—and 4.3% stake from Sri Saradha Logistics.

This share purchase will trigger a mandatory open offer at ₹390 a share. The open offer, which will allow UltraTech to add another 26% stake, will be done subsequently after obtaining regulatory approvals.

UltraTech had made a financial investment in ICL to acquire 22.77% equity at ₹268 per share in June 2024. Billionaire investor Radhakishan Damani and his associates had offloaded shares worth ₹1,889 crore in the deal. "Post this financial investment, the promoter group approached us as they wanted to sell their holding in the company," UltraTech said.

Kumar Mangalam Birla, chairman, Aditya Birla Group, said: "Every investment in a core sector like cement accelerates economic activity and drives progress. These investments have also facilitated India's nationwide infrastructure upgrade."

Nirmala: Centre's allocation high, K'taka govt spreading false info

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman here on Sunday lashed out at the Congress-led state government, alleging that it is spreading misinformation that the Centre is not giving the state its due.

Addressing the first press conference in Bengaluru after presenting the budget, Sitharaman, who is a Rajya Sabha member from Karnataka, reeled out statistics to claim that the allocation from the Centre to the state has increased substantially since Prime Minister Narendra Modi came to power in 2014. "The current government in Karnataka keeps doing wrong 'prachar', which, I am sorry to say, is not helping anybody," she said.

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman addresses a press meet at the BJP office in Bengaluru on Sunday | SHASHIDHAR BYRAPPA

Karnataka has been allocated Rs 45,485.80 crore as tax devolution and Rs 15,299.7 crore as grant-in- aid in the 2024-25 budget. From 2014, when Modi came to power for the first time, and 2024, Rs 2,95,818 was budgeted as tax devolution and Rs 2,36,955 as grant-in-aid for the state, she said. In comparison, it was Rs 81,791 crore and Rs 60,779 crore, respectively under the UPA rule, she said.

"This means, under the UPA rule, every year for ten years, Karnataka received Rs 8,179 crore and under Modi 3.0, this year alone Rs 45,485.80 has been budgeted for Karnataka," she said. P4

EXPRESS READ

BJP-JDS to hold protest march from August 3

Bengaluru: In a bid to mount pressure on the ruling Congress against the scams in the state, the BJP and JDS will hold a march from Bengaluru to Mysuru on August 3 and conclude on August 10. The leaders of the two parties took part in the meeting to chalk out a strategy | P4

23 Bangladeshis arrested in Agartala

Agartala: Twenty-three Bangladeshis preparing to board a train to Chennai were arrested at Agartala railway station. A joint team from the RPF, BSF, and GRP conducted a raid at Agartala station on Saturday evening and detained the foreigners, who did not have valid documents.

NEW GUVS
FOR EIGHT STATES AND ONE UNION TERRITORY

The President, following the recommendations from the Centre, on Saturday night appointed new governors for Telangana, Sikkim, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Meghalaya, Maharashtra, Punjab and Assam and the Union Territory of Puducherry | P4,7

SMART MOVE

Cops turn drug users into informers to nab peddlers

RAKSHITH GOWDA @ Bengaluru

BENGALURU police have stopped registering First Information Reports (FIRs) against those caught in drug abuse cases for the first time. Instead, the police are turning them into informants to crack down on drug peddlers and drug networks. Cases are, however, booked if they are caught again.

This strategy seems to have worked and in the last six months, 619 kg of drugs have been seized and 219 accused arrested, including 36 foreign nationals.

Earlier, the police booked cases against drug abusers under Section 27B of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, resulting in court fines of Rs 10,000 or an imprisonment of up to six months.

City Police Commissioner B Dayananda told TNIE, "Our focus and target is to reduce the entry and sale of drugs in the city. Booking cases against drug abusers only increases the number of cases in the documents. By using them as sources, we can catch peddlers and dismantle their networks. From last year, the number of seizures and arrest of peddlers has increased," he said.

He explained that the youth, who often seek an adrenaline rush, experiment with prohibited substances. If they are booked, it can turn them into addicts or peddlers. It could also stigmatise them and potentially ruin their lives, he added.

This approach, however, does not imply leniency for all drug consumers. "Not all drug users are given a free pass," he noted. "We verify if an individual is a habitual abuser." P2